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ABSTRACT

Institutional responses to vandalism and anonymous damage seldom deal with the apparent lack of respect for people and property and the failure to accept responsibility for one's environment which are at the root of the problem. The Point Ownership Program/Earn Your Environment (POP/EYE) effort at the State University of New York at Delhi attempts to control vandalism and anonymous damage by requiring students to earn the privilege of living in residence facilities. POP/EYE uses a point system which gives high priority for a return to residence halls to students with low point totals. Each resident student begins with zero points. Points are assigned to student groups for anonymous damage done in their residence hall. Points are not assigned for assessable damage, which is billed to the individuals responsible. This method encourages students to accept responsibility for themselves and generates positive peer pressure to be a "good citizen of the community." The program also allows students to earn the right to live in the halls by receiving point credits for significant contributions to the quality of life on campus or in the residence hall. Such contributions include completion of a long-term project which improves residence hall appearance, participation in governance, or implementation of a nonalcoholic program. POP/EYE seems to be working, as Delhi has seen a decrease in facilities damage and in the workload of campus maintenance. (KL)

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P.O.P./E.Y.E.
(Point Ownership Program/Earn Your Environment A Program For The Effective and Humanistic Management of Residence Facility Damage)

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INTRODUCTION:

"The word education literally means the act of leading out of. It is the formal and deliberate attempt to facilitate the 'becoming' process, to help a person develop his potential, to help him come out of himself..." (Harold Grant, Michigan State University).

As student affairs professionals, we are concerned about what and how a student learns. We have the responsibility of educating students, not merely by good example, but through the development and implementation of programs that lead to student development.

The concepts acquired both through formal and informal means, will help students deal with problems that they do not yet know that they will encounter.

Nationally there is an increasing incidence of vandalism in college residence halls. The repercussions are negative, both in terms of student behavior, and in the degeneration of facilities.

Vandalism and anonymous damage is not a problem new to residence halls. The problem has a long and tiresome history common to almost all residential institutions.

Dr. Virginia L. Radley, President of the State University of New York at Oswego, gave the problem a humorous, albeit historical, perspective. "Our problem (vandalism) isn't unique. Perhaps one morning in A.D. 455, as the sun came up over Rome's Seven Hills, the superintendent of schools inspected the playgrounds after Genseric's vandals had rioted for 14 days and nights and said aloud, 'Why me Jupiter?' And if Jupiter answered, he probably said 'Find your own solution.'" (American School and University Magazine, October 1980, p. 44)

The problem, of course, has no easy solution. If it had, it would have long ago ceased to be a problem. Institutional responses to vandalism and anonymous damage are as varied and as numerous as the incidents themselves. An apparently successful method of dealing with damage in residence halls (the concept of collective assessment of all residents to recover the cost of repair) was at the same time an admission of defeat. It has failed to deal with the root causes of the problem, which is the lack of respect for people and property and the lack of acceptance of responsibility for one's own environment.

Operating on the truism that "as a place degenerates in appearance, people care less to take care of it," colleges have spent thousands of dollars in resources to replace worn out or missing equipment. Yet, merely injecting money into residence halls is not an answer. As with collective assessment, this type of solution deals only with the effects, not the causes of vandalism.

There is considerable evidence in the recent literature dealing with residence halls (i.e., Making Yourself At Home, Student Housing: A Report From the Educational Facilities Laboratories; Taming Campus Vandals, American School and University Magazine, October 1980), to attest to the fact that all people have a tendency, perhaps a need, to set territorial limits. They tend to assume territorial ownership and protect their space. This is especially true if they have contributed toward the enhancement of their physical environment.

THE PROGRAM

Thus, the development of the P.O.P./E.Y.E (Point Ownership Program/Earn Your Environment) system has as its foundation, the alteration of several student-held assumptions. Primarily, it disallows the assumption on the part of students that their return to the residence halls each semester is automatic. The P.O.P. portion of the system places each student on a priority list based on the ac-

quisition of points. The E.Y.E. portion of the system stipulates a variety of active and passive behaviors and/or activities which permit each student to earn the right to return to residence halls. Under these circumstances, living in the residence halls becomes more of a privilege than it is an absolute right.

As the name implies, P.O.P/E.Y.E. revolves around a point system. Each resident student begins with zero points and must attempt to remain as close to zero as possible. Points are assigned to student groups for anonymous damage which is done in a residence hall. The point value assigned is based solely on the estimated dollar-value of repair. It forces students to accept responsibility not only for themselves and their environment, but also requires them to be concerned about the activities of their guests and their peers. It requires resident students who are free to stay in the residence halls or leave them, to be interdependent on each other and to communicate with each other and share responsibility for people and property in their immediate environment. In short, it generates positive peer pressure to become and remain a "good citizen of the community." Failure to be a "good citizen" reduces a student's priority for on-campus housing. With limited space available, the higher one's priority (zero points) the greater the likelihood of returning to the residence halls for the next semester.

THE MECHANISM

Negative points are assigned according to the following method:

1. For anonymous damage done in or to main public lounges, recreation rooms, public bathrooms, some laundry rooms and centrally located safety equipment in a residence hall, points are assigned to all hall residents.

2. For anonymous damage done on or to floor lounges, corridors, some bathrooms and floor safety equipment, points are assigned to all floor residents.
3. For anonymous damage done to quad areas, quad bathrooms, quad corridors or quad safety equipment, points are assigned to all quad residents.

Points are assigned only for anonymous damage. Damage that is assessable to individuals or groups is billed to those individuals or groups and points are not assigned to other residents of the area (building, floor, quad).

Points are assigned for the total amount of the anonymous damage to each resident of the area. For instance, a $5.00 ceiling tile (material and labor cost) which is anonymously damaged on 2nd Floor D Quad of X Hall results in five points being assigned to each of the residents of 2nd Floor D Quad X Hall. (Amounts less than $1.00 are rounded to the next highest dollar)

All damage-producing incidents are logged. The Maintenance Department generates its work orders from the logs. The Maintenance Department provides the Housing Office with a damage list and the dollar value of the repair.

Each day the hall director reads the maintenance log and initiates investigations on each incident. Any damage that can be assessed to individuals or groups is assessed to that individual or group and reported to the Housing Office. By deleting assessed damage from the Maintenance Department's damage list, a refined anonymous damage list is generated. The damage itemized on this refined list is further categorized into hall, floor, or quad damage. Appropriate points are assigned to student residents in the damaged areas. The information is then sent to the computer center where a printout is made of all students and points. The computer also generates a card for each student who has been assigned points. This card is sent to the student to notify him of the point assignment and to

inform the student of the reason for that assignment. The point accumulation follows the student through any number of room or hall changes.

It is the E.Y.E. portion of the system that takes the sting out of what, on the surface, some students viewed as "guilt by association." This portion of the program is considerably more developmental in nature. The E.Y.E. portion of the system assists the students in "earning" their environment in an active way. Positive points are assigned to individuals who contribute in significant ways to the quality of life on campus and in the residence halls. As students earn positive points, the Resident Director informs the Housing Office and adjustment cards "credit" these students, thus reducing assigned points and increasing their standing on the P.O.P. priority list.

Positive Points are Earned by Students for:

1. Completion of a long-term project whose primary function is to have an enduring positive impact on the residence halls physical facilities (i.e., furniture repair and rehabilitation, painting of public areas, external planting, etc.).
2. Active membership on the Residence Hall Council(s) and hall governance:

   Points earned in the following way:

   a. Membership on Appeals Board - 5 points per meeting
   b. Executive Board members - 5 points per meeting
   c. Floor Representatives - 3 points per meeting
   d. Attendees - 2 points per meeting

3. For membership in the campus student governance structure:

   a. Senators - 5 points per meeting
   b. Committee member - 2 points per meeting

4. For the development and implementation of non-alcoholic programs - up to 10 points per program, depending on size and success.

5. For contributions made on behalf of residence hall programs.

   a. Hall-wide parties and activities

      (1) *Chairperson - 8 points per activity

      (2) Workers - 5 points per activity

   b. Floor activities and parties

      (1) *Chairperson - 5 points per activity

      (2) Workers - 3 points per activity

      *The overall supervisor-implementer-planner of an activity on a hall-wide basis may earn up to 10 points, while the same responsibilities carried out on a floor basis allow the overall supervisor a maximum of 7 points.

It should be noted that the point designations listed are maximums and that fewer than the maximums can be awarded at the discretion of the Resident Director in whose building the activities take place.

It should also be noted that no points are earned by students when their normal job responsibilities place them in situations where others may earn points. For instance, students paid by the maintenance department to perform clean-up duties may not earn points while they are working; likewise, Residence Assistants may not earn points for participation in activities that are part of their job responsibilities. However, either students or R.A.s may earn points for services performed above their expected responsibilities. The discretion of the Resident Director in these areas is vital.

CONCLUSION

Regardless of how one measures success, the P.C.P/E.Y.E. system seems to have a positive impact. There has been (at Delhi) a dramatic decrease in both per-capita damage and the amount of anonymous damage in the residence facilities. There has also been a visible decrease in campus-wide maintenance workload, possibly because the system seems to encourage "good citizenship."

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